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(c) The main reasons are—

(i) the failure of some Election Officers to conduct the elections and the consequent necessity to appoint other persons as Election Officers after ascertaining that the elections have not been held;

(ii) opposition of some parties in the villages to conduct the election at the appointed time; and

(iii) want of suitable persons for appointment as Election Officers.

Mr. P. V. KRISHNAYYA CHOUDARI:—"May I know why the Government have not appointed Government officers to finish these elections as early as possible?"

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"In most cases, it was not possible to indent on the service of officers of the Revenue Department. Now that a service of panchayat officers has been constituted, I hope the elections will be completed very early."

Mr. P. V. KRISHNAYYA CHOUDARI:—"May I ask whether for the last one year Government officers were lent to the district and taluk boards to finish their elections?"

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"They were lent, Sir, but the Revenue authorities do not consider it a legitimate work of the Revenue Department."

Grants to local bodies for the maintenance of roads.

* 348 *Q.*—Mr. V. M. RAMASWAMI MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) what principles govern the granting of the Government grant to the maintenance of (1) the trunk roads and (2) the second-class roads;

(*b*) what grants do each of the district boards receive under each head and the length of the trunk and the second-class roads maintained by them;

(*c*) when were these grants last fixed; and

(*d*) whether any representation has been made by the district boards for increasing their grants?

A.—(*a*) Grants for the maintenance of trunk and second-class roads are given in accordance with the following principles:—

Trunk roads.—In order to ensure a uniform standard of maintenance of trunk roads and to assist local bodies in maintaining these roads in proper condition, the Government have undertaken to make good the expenditure incurred by local bodies on their maintenance, subject to certain prescribed maxima. Local bodies are expected to spend as much as possible from their own funds in addition to the Government contribution. If any road is not maintained efficiently in any year, the grant for that year is liable to be withheld in whole or in part.

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Second-class roads.—The grants for second-class roads represent the grant formerly given to district boards in aid of their general resources, after deducting therefrom a sum of Rs. 1·74 lakhs required for the maintenance of a staff of health officers. These grants are given to the extent of half of the expenditure incurred subject to a maximum fixed for each district board and are subject to the condition that the roads are maintained in a reasonably good condition.

(*b*) A statement[a] is placed on the table.

(*c*) The maintenance grants for trunk roads were last fixed in 1931 and those for second-class roads last revised in 1929.

(*d*) Yes.

Mr. V. M. RAMASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"May I ask what steps the Government have taken in regard to the representations made by the local bodies for increased grants for the maintenance of their roads especially in view of the fact that their finances have been adversely affected by the passing of the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act?"

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"The Government also are not in a position to largely increase their grants, but they are now considering the question of redistribution of the grants to second-class roads with reference to their actual mileage."

The RAJA OF KHALLIKOTE:—"In view of the fact that some district boards are spending more than double the Government grant for the maintenance of second-class roads and in view of the fact that these grants were revised so late as the year 1929, will the Government consider the question of revising these grants once again and grant larger amounts to these boards which spend much larger amounts on these roads?"

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"The Government are now considering the question of revising the grants to second-class roads with reference to the actual mileage in each district. I may also state that the Government will not be in a position to largely increase the existing grants. It is also expected that it is the duty of local bodies to maintain roads and Government would only assist them."

Diwan Bahadur C. S. RATNASABHAPATI MUDALIYAR:—"May I ask if the reclassification of the roads as proposed by the Road Committee and Mr. Hilton Brown will be taken up by the Government?"

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"The question cannot be taken up as it involves a very large extra expenditure."

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[a] Printed as Appendix II on page 614 infra.

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Mr. P. V. KRISHNAYYA CHOUDARI :—" May I know the reason for the variation in the grants: it is Rs. 570 in some cases, 665 in some cases and Rs. 700 in other cases? "

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI :—" As the hon. Member is aware, a committee sat on this question and fixed these rates with reference to the average cost of maintenance in each district."

Mr. BASHEER AHMED SAYEED :—" May I ask, pending the revision of the whole question, whether the sum of Rs. 1·74 lakhs which they are now deducting from the total sum will also be made available to the local boards for the purpose of maintenance of roads? "

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI :—" I do not think it is possible."

Diwan Bahadur C. S. RATNASABHAPATI MUDALIYAR :—" May I ask when the Government would consider the question of redistribution of these grants, and whether they will be pleased to make the redistribution on a more equitable basis so that the boards which spend more on their roads may get larger grants? "

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI :—" The resdistribution of the grants for the maintenance of second-class roads on a mileage basis may mean the reduction of the existing grants to some boards."

Rao Bahadur C. NATESA MUDALIYAR :—" May I ask why in some districts the trunk roads are kept in such a bad condition in spite of the Government grants? "

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI :—" It is the responsibility of the District Board."

Rao Bahadur A. T. PANNIRSELVAM :—" May I ask whether, in view of the fact that the Tanjore District is in a unique position of having no trunk roads at all, the Government will favourably consider the old request of Tanjore, namely, to classify the main road No. 1 connecting South Arcot and Trichinopoly as a trunk road? "

The hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI :—" I will consider the suggestion; but of course the principle is that only roads which are of Provincial importance are classed as trunk roads."

Diwan Bahadur C. S. RATNASABHAPATI MUDALIYAR :—" May I ask whether the Government is aware that the Tanjore District is in the unique position of being the richest board in the Province? "

Grants to trunk roads and bridges.

* 349 *Q.*—Mr. M. S. SRESHTA : Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) the mileage of trunk roads in every district of this Province at present;

(*b*) the number of bridges in the trunk roads in every district of the Province and the length of each bridge; and

(*c*) what the amount of grant made this year by the Government for (*a*) roads and (*b*) bridges in each district of this Province is?